

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising two or more sterile environments, each of which are at least partially enclosed by a wall member, a portion of said wall member of at least one of said environments having means for joining it to a portion of said wall member of another environment, and said wall members at or within the joined portions being capable of being opened to connect the sterile environments, wherein at least a portion of one or more of the surfaces that form said joined portions is provided with a bactericidal substance which ~~sterilises~~ sterilizes the join before opening.
2. (original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said joining means comprises an adhesive.
3. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, wherein said joining means is in the form of an adhesive tape or layer provided on the wall member of one or both of said sterile environment.
4. (original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said adhesive tape or layer comprises a backing layer which may be peeled off.
5. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1, wherein the wall members are openable at or within the joined portion by perforating a membrane.
6. (original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the means for joining the sterile environments comprises a membrane having a rupturable cleft.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein said bactericidal substance is a bactericidal gas contained in a capsule.
8. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein said bactericidal substance is impregnated into said joining means.
9. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein at least one of said sterile environments comprises an enclosure formed by a perforable membrane.
10. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein at least one of said sterile environments comprises a carrier containing, surgical instruments, fluids, medicines, a glove, blood or saline.
11. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein one of said sterile environments is an operating enclosure in which surgery may be carried out.
12. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein at least one of said sterile environments comprises a collapsible bubble made of a plastics material.
13. (original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein means are provided to fill the bubble with air or gas to inflate it such that it is suitable for the performance of a surgical procedure.
14. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein a frame is provided to support at least one of said sterile environments.
15. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein said frame comprises one or more arches slidably mounted over a surgical trolley.

16. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein means are provided for filling at least one of said sterile environments with sterile air or gas.

17. (currently amended) ~~A peripheral sterile environment~~ An apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein said air or gas has a bactericidal substance added to it.

18. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein one of said sterile environments is a window unit comprising a window with a cover on one side.

19. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein said means for joining said window unit to a portion of a wall member of the other sterile environment comprises an adhesive layer applied to said cover, said adhesive layer being impregnated with a bactericidal substance.

20. (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in ~~any proceeding claim~~ claim 1, wherein said joining means further comprises means for resealing an opening after the sterile environments have been connected and means for detaching the sterile environments after said opening has been resealed.

21. (currently amended) A peripheral sterile environment comprising a wall member having means for joining it to a flexible membrane of a main sterile environment, wherein at least a portion of a surface on or adjacent the wall member is provided with a bactericidal substance which ~~sterilises~~ sterilizes the region of join before severing or opening said membrane within said join to communicate said sterile environments with another.

22. (currently amended) A window unit comprising a window on one side of which a cover is provided having means for joining it to a flexible membrane of a sterile environment, wherein at least a portion of one or more of the surfaces which form the join is provided with a bactericidal substance to ~~sterilise~~ sterilize said join before severing said membrane within said join to connect said window to said sterile environment.

23. (currently amended) A glove carrier comprising a glove, the exterior of said glove enclosed by an enclosure and the interior of said glove accessible to a user, said enclosure having means for joining it to a flexible membrane of a sterile environment, wherein at least a portion of one or more of surfaces in the region of the join is provided with a bactericidal substance which ~~sterilise~~ sterilize the region of the join in use before severing or opening said membrane within said join to connect said exterior of said glove to said sterile environment.

24. (original) A flexible membrane for confining a sterile environment, there being provided a bactericidal substance such as an adhesive or bactericidal adhesive tape which extends over or around a region of said membrane which region is adapted to be opened or ruptured to define an opening in said membrane in use.

25. (currently amended) An isolation operating environment comprising, an operating enclosure, a drape for communicating the operating enclosure with a patient, and one or more peripheral enclosures for connecting to the operating enclosure, said drape and one or more peripheral enclosures each having a wall member or membrane with means for joining them to respective portions of a wall member of said operating enclosure, said wall member or membrane at the joined portions being capable of being opened to communicate said peripheral enclosures and patient with said operating enclosure, wherein at least a portion of one or more surfaces which meet to form the joins is provided with a bactericidal substance to ~~sterilise~~ sterilize said joins before opening.

26. (original) A surgical drape having an initially sealed opening and provided with bactericidal treated adhesive or adhesive tape adjacent said opening for joining said drape with a further sterile environment in use.

27. (original) A surgical drape as claimed in claim 26, wherein said opening is sealed by a cover and said adhesive or adhesive tape is provided on said cover.

28. (original) A surgical drape as claimed in claim 27, wherein said cover is a perforable membrane.

29. (currently amended) A method of connecting two or more sterile environments each of which are at least partially enclosed by a wall member, comprising joining a portion of said wall member of one environment to a portion of said wall member of another environment and opening said wall members at or within the joined portions to connect said sterile environments, wherein at least a portion of one or more of the surfaces that form the joined portions is provided with a bactericidal substance to ~~sterilise~~ sterilize the region of join before opening.

30. (original) A method of providing a sterile operating environment, comprising placing a drape over part of a patient, providing an enclosure over said drape, adhering said drape and a wall member of said enclosure together by means of bactericidal treated adhesive or tape, adhering said wall member of said enclosure to at least one peripheral enclosure by means of bactericidal treated adhesive or tape, and providing intercommunication openings in regions of said drape and wall member which are confined by or beneath said adhesive or adhesive tape.